

VZCZCXRO4178  
PP RUEHBC RUEHDE RUEHKUK  
DE RUEHMS #1310/01 2471303  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
P 041303Z SEP 06  
FM AMEMBASSY MUSCAT  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7097  
INFO RUEHEE/ARAB LEAGUE COLLECTIVE  
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 0433  
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 0325  
RHMFISS/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 MUSCAT 001310

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

STATE FOR NEA/ARP, NEA/PPD, NEA/PI, AND INR/R/MR  
STATE PASS USTR FOR N. MOORJANI, J. BUNTIN  
LONDON FOR TSOU  
PARIS FOR ZEYA  
USCENTCOM FOR PLUSH  
FOREIGN PRESS CENTER FOR SILAS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [OIIP](#) [KPAO](#) [KMDR](#) [MU](#)

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: VIOLENCE IN IRAQ, UNSCR 1706, ANNAN'S  
MIDDLE EAST TOUR; IRAN.

-----  
BLOCK QUOTES: HALTING "A FIERCE CIVIL WAR"  
-----

11. On September 3, government-owned Arabic daily "Oman" (circulation 38,000) carried an editorial, "Control of Violence in Iraq, the Responsibility of all Parties:"

"Despite all the loud cries that warned against the continuation of the slaughter and assassinations in Iraq and the severe blood shedding of the innocent Iraqi people, they continue to mount in a manner that triggers concern about what is happening and its unforeseen consequences.  
Though the situation in Iraq has entered the fray of America's upcoming elections, the most serious risk that Iraq faces these days is certainly the transformation of the situation into a fierce civil war. This would, no doubt, be accompanied by segregations, evacuations, displacement, and a deepening of the differences between the people of Iraq, one of the most ancient civilizations in history...  
Stopping or limiting violence should have priority over any other issues; it means the saving of innocent lives and the hindering of any attempts that push toward the ignition of a fierce civil war."

-----  
UN RESOLUTION NO. 1706: "BEGINNING OF A DARK TUNNEL"  
-----

12. A September 2 editorial in "Al-Watan" (privately owned Arabic daily, circulation 42,000) commented "UN Resolution No. 1706 - the Beginning of a Dark Tunnel:"

"The issuance of UN Resolution 1706 has led the relationship between the Sudanese Government and the Security Council into direct confrontation, one that opens the door for different interpretations and paves the way for the use of all possible instruments...  
Despite the seriousness of the confrontation and the outcomes that might emerge, the Sudanese government has not delayed the declaration of its rejection of the Resolution. Its stance has developed into a 'readiness' to face any 'foreign interference' while the African Union's forces are replaced by international ones in Darfour.  
Statements by some Sudanese officials seem dubious and dangerous. In a speech before a national congress in Obeid, Capital of the Western State of Kurdufan, Sudan, Ali Othman Mohammed Taha, Vice President of Sudan said, 'we have national options and plans to face the foreign interference, and the conflict with the international

community needs a long breath,' adding, 'The rejection of the interference of the international forces in Dar Four should be changed to an active and continuous movement. However, we are ready for all possibilities.'"

-----  
KOFI ANNAN TOURS A REGION "AT A CROSSROADS"  
-----

13. Also on September 3, "Oman" opined on "Positive Signs in Annan's Tour of the Middle East":

"Kofi Anna's current tour is the most extensive ever launched by a UN Secretary General of this pivotal area of the world. This indicates the seriousness and importance of the issues to be tackled by the UN leader and what he is going to hear during this tour. The Arab countries have decided to take their cause to the Security Council, raising this issue again before it following the death of the peace process... Naturally, the UN Secretary General, who has made an extensive tour of this area, will submit a report and offer his opinions and points of view about the situation... It is not an exaggeration to say that the situation in the Middle East is at a crossroads. In other words, it could be said that there is a chance for the area to enter into a phase, which is very near to a just and comprehensive peace, particularly in the shadow of the recent losses suffered by Israel due to its oppressive war against Lebanon. In fact, these losses are compound losses, not restricted to the human and material losses, but including the psychological shock and loss of confidence in concepts long established in Israeli minds. Peace could be achieved if all concerned parties, particularly Israel, listened to the voice of logic, benefited from the recent lessons, showed the courage to enter into the path of an equitable and comprehensive peace process."

-----  
MUSCAT 00001310 002 OF 002

U.S.-IRAN: "NEGOTIATIONS OR CONFRONTATIONS?"  
-----

14. "Al-Watan" wondered whether "Negotiations or Confrontations?" will take the lead in U.S.-Iran relations in a September 1 editorial:

"The U.S. President's administration is trying to change the ruling regime in Iran, but does not say so plainly. It supports the Iranian opposition with tens of millions of dollars and spends additional millions in a campaign against the Iranian government. It now endeavors to impose international economic sanctions on Tehran, hoping that these would weaken the Iranian regime, leading to its collapse. However, most of these actions have to date mainly contributed to the strengthening of Tehran.

At the beginning, when America invaded Afghanistan and toppled the Taliban Government, it helped the Iranian government; Iran also considered that regime its enemy. Due to that, we saw broad cooperation between Iran and America for the fulfillment of U.S. goals in Afghanistan.

In Iraq, all of us remember that Saddam Hussein waged a long severe war against Iran, even using chemical weapons against the Iranian army. So, when America removed Saddam, it removed an enemy to Iran, contributing to the strengthening of the Iranian government and regime. Now, as a result of the U.S. policy in Iraq, that country is ruled by a regime some of whose elements were once nurtured by the Iranians.

Moreover, the economic sanctions that America hopes to impose on Iran would have no tangible effect... Sanctions on Iran will start and end by imposing an embargo on the travel of Iranian officials, alongside some restrictions on the airlines, as was the case in Libya.

Iran would even be luckier today than Iraq and Libya due to the increase in the oil prices and the world's pressing need for every drop. Iran will find a buyer and a payer for its oil."

GRAPPO